



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

INTERDEPENDENCE OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY POLICIES

BY MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM H. CARTER, U.S.A.

“In every well-balanced development of nations, as of individuals, the warlike instinct and the military point of honor are not repressed and extinguished, but only refined and civilized. It belongs to the pedagogue, not to the philosopher, to declaim against them as relics of barbarism.”—PARKMAN.

THE military policy of a nation is fundamentally dependent upon its political policy. The lamented John Hay, late Secretary of State, has thus tersely stated this relation:

“War and politics, campaign and statecraft, are Siamese twins, inseparable and interdependent; to talk of military operations without the direction and interference of an administration is as absurd as to plan a campaign without recruits, pay, or rations. Historical judgment of war is subject to an inflexible law, either very imperfectly understood or very constantly lost sight of. Every war is begun, dominated and ended by political considerations; without a nation, without a government, without money or credit, without popular enthusiasm which furnishes volunteers, or public support which endures conscription, there could be no army and no war—no beginning nor end of methodical hostilities.”

Faultlessly and concisely stated, these are the obstacles which confront all organizations and societies for the prevention of war. In the face of accumulated and presumptuous wrong, affecting the commercial or political rights of a nation, all fine-spun and academic arguments against war are swept away in the rising tide of public opinion, against which parties and governments are as chaff before the wind. It was this state of the public mind that Washington portrayed in his Farewell Address:

“Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody

contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, . . . leads to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld."

It is the acceptance of these unalterable facts that brings to the front, in each generation, those who contend for a military policy adapted to the genius of our political institutions. The ever changing elements controlling a Republican form of government seem absolutely athwart the path of a consistent policy, sufficiently enduring to insure a guarantee of military efficiency. Nevertheless, there is a steadily increasing sentiment that a reasonable preparation for probable contingencies is the surest guarantee of peace. It is this sentiment which has brought about the reconstruction of the fleets, which in twenty years have passed from a state of absolute and shameful mediocrity to a high plane of efficiency, creditable alike to American shipyards and a superb naval personnel.

Nothing succeeds like success is an old and trite adage, but that the very reverse is true in the upbuilding of military policies is continually exemplified in history. Out of defeat and humiliation have come some of the most perfect systems of military organizations and administration. In our own country the subject of a sound military policy was never seriously considered until the repulse of the American forces in Canada aroused the Continental Congress to the emergency and directed attention to the urgent need of a war office.

On January 24, 1776, a committee of Congress was appointed to consider the proper military policy to meet the needs of the young nation, and after six months of delay, the report of the committee, which recommended a "Board of War and Ordnance," comprising seven members, was adopted.

The duties of the Board were to superintend the raising, equipping and dispatching of the forces called into the service of the United Colonies. With that jealousy of the military arm which has characterized so much of the political opposition to any effective policy, Congress, by reso-

lution of October 17, 1777, established a new Board of War to consist of three persons, not members of Congress, with substantially the same duties as previously assigned to the committee of seven, with a proviso that *every member of Congress should have free access to the records of the Board*. Two members of Congress were later added to this Board.

It was not until February 7, 1781, that Congress authorized the office of Secretary of War, and General Benjamin Lincoln, the first to serve in that capacity, was not chosen until the following October. The development of the functions of the office proceeded apace, and on January 27, 1785, Congress passed an ordinance for ascertaining the powers and duties of the Secretary of War. Coming into existence when the Colonies were battling for liberty, and being held responsible for the distribution of troops among the Colonies, as well as for the adjustment of all questions of rank and precedence and the settlement of accounts, it is remarkable that so satisfactory an administration became possible. As there was no provision for a Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of War administered affairs for the sea, as well as for the land forces.

From such a beginning has come the great office which, in late years, has been heavily burdened with duties of vast import having little or no bearing upon the conduct of the army, and assigned to the Secretary of War because through more than a century a system of administration and accountability had been developed which gave assurance that great works committed to the Department of War would be faithfully and honestly executed.

Within the War Department itself there was no authoritative body in early years whose particular province it was to formulate military policies or exercise prevision with a view to advance preparation. Matters therefore drifted while the nation adjusted itself to new political conditions and recovered slowly from the waste and losses of the war for liberty.

The history of the first years of the Republic were filled with international bickering and fraught with danger, but it was not until the closing years of the century which had witnessed the birth of the French Republic that a conflict with our former allies seemed inevitable. It would have been a melancholy memory, with later generations of Ameri-

cans, had the pages of history been thus early blotted by war with the veterans of France who had so nobly espoused our cause at the critical period of the Revolution, then less than twenty years away. War was averted; there came out of the preparation, undertaken at great cost and directed by Washington, Hamilton, Pinckney, Knox, and others, some most valuable instruction, but there was not in the War Department any individual or group capable of recognizing and perpetuating useful and basic elements of military policy.

Hamilton, who formulated much of the valuable military literature of that period, wrote despairingly to the Secretary of War under date of June 27, 1799:

"It is a pity, my dear sir, and a reproach, that our administration have no general plan. Certainly there ought to be one formed without delay. Among other things, it should be agreed what precise force should be created, naval and land, and this proportioned to the state of our finances."

The hurried and expensive preparation for a war which never took place seemed to lull the authorities to a sense of security once more and this continued, notwithstanding the humiliation of the intervening years, until the War of 1812 was actually upon the nation. The campaigns of this war left our people with a sense of being not only without a sound military policy but of having lost the art of war. However, time and the memory of Jackson's success at New Orleans, soon mellowed the sense of defeat. The only policy coming out of our bitter experience was embraced in a system of harbor defense and the selection of naval stations under the advice and guidance of the distinguished French officer, Bernard, who, in turn, was Engineer, Aide-de-Camp to Napoleon, Chief Engineer of the French Army, and who closed his career as Minister of War of France, to which office he was appointed after his return from the United States. For sixteen years following Waterloo, this distinguished officer held a commission of brevet brigadier-general in the Corps of Engineers of the United States Army and devoted himself to developing the system of permanent fortification on which we placed dependence until the advent of smokeless powder and breech-loading, high-power rifles.

Our isolation and the rivalries of European nations have served in the past to guard us from the usual result of

neglect of military policies. All our energies have been directed to the development of a vast agricultural domain and the upbuilding of infant industries. This devotion to the production of wealth, while neglecting the initiation and conservation of any military policy whatever, has served periodically to subject the nation to humiliation, which diplomacy could assuage only with questionable balm—an anesthetic without an operation.

Beginning with Washington and Hamilton and coming down the generations, many talented officers have studied and striven for an effective military policy adapted to the needs of the nation. Individual effort sometimes seemed successful, but inertia invariably followed cessation of personal activity. In commenting upon the helplessness of individual effort, Elihu Root, in an address delivered upon the occasion of the laying of the corner stone of the Army War College, said:

“Only an institution perpetual, but always changing in its individual elements, in which, by conference and discussion, a consensus of matured opinion can be reached, can perpetuate the results of individual effort, secure continuity of military policy, and command for its authorized, conclusive expressions of military judgment upon military questions the respect and effectiveness to which that judgment is entitled.”

In this same address a well-deserved tribute was paid to the memory of the late General Emory Upton, whose published studies and conclusions as to the results of our failure to adhere to a wise military policy, throughout the last century, have become classic in the minds of military students. After a painstaking review of the details of our wars, General Upton proposed a system involving these features:

“The regular army in time of peace to be organized on the expansive principle and in proportion to the population, not to exceed one thousand in one million;

“The national volunteers to be officered and supported by the government, to be organized on the expansive principle and to consist in time of peace of one battalion of two hundred men to each congressional district;

“The militia to be supported exclusively by the States and as a last resort to be used only as intended by the Constitution, namely, to execute the laws, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.”

In all his studies of our military situation General Upton had in mind the limitations existing under conditions prior to 1898. It was little dreamed in his day that the war with Spain, undertaken solely to remedy conditions in the island

of Cuba, would bring in its wake such complications as the military occupation and civil government of distant islands bordering the China Sea, to be soon followed by the construction and fortification of the Panama Canal. These constitute political elements requiring deep study and broad consideration in connection with and as part of any military policy which the nation may establish.

In the not distant past the main functions of the regular army were embraced in guarding the movement of our ever advancing frontiers, westward into and over the country claimed as hunting grounds of the Indians, and in keeping alive a knowledge of the art of war in a nation given over body and soul to business.

Following the Civil War with some two million men recently released from service who, in the natural order, would be available for military service for many years, there was then no anxiety concerning a military policy. The army was steadily reduced until the question arose, some ten years later, as to what should be the fixed policy concerning the regular army, dependence being placed upon volunteers for any possible war. A committee of Congress was appointed to consider the subject and, in 1876, announced that:

“Our Army is viewed as a nucleus wherein is to be acquired and preserved military knowledge, and from which should radiate the elements of instruction and discipline, thus to form in time of war a competent force endowed with talent to direct it as a whole, and provided with agencies capable of grasping the responsibility, organization, and distribution of numerous supplies necessary to the conduct of successful military operations.”

It will be observed that this is not an announcement of military policy nor is there suggestion of any political policy. It is merely in the nature of a recommendation to Congress to regard the regular army as a school of instruction. There was no suggestion of any plan for passing the trained regulars into a reserve, nor was there any apparent thought of a peace organization capable of expansion automatically in war. For more than thirty years following the Civil War this view of the committee of Congress prevailed, while the army dwindled to less than 20,000 men, representing skeleton organizations of the line. Beyond the adoption of a scheme of harbor fortification, the little regular army was left without material change to guard the development of an empire in the West and to keep alive the military art until

war was actually declared with Spain. There had been no policy other than that dictated by expediency of the moment, and so 1898 found the country incapable of putting a single Army Corps in the field, until volunteers could be brought into service.

A brief and successful war in former times would have been followed by self-satisfaction sufficient to cause all defects of our system to be ignored. The public press, however, had found so much fault with the conduct of the war with Spain that a commission, composed of veterans of the Civil War, was appointed to investigate conditions. After taking many volumes of testimony, certain definite recommendations were made, but they fell far short of diagnosing the case. The insurrection in the Philippines distracted public attention for a time, but the sense of public duty had been too deeply aroused to permit it to drift into somnolence without some effort in the direction of a policy in event of future call to arms.

For more than a hundred years Presidents had periodically invited the attention of Congress to the fact that unless a system or policy for organizing our military resources should be adopted in time of peace, the legitimate consequences would be initial defeat, humiliation, and greater cost due to preparation of men and material during the existence of a state of war.

Immediately following the war with Spain the War Department was burdened with the need of restoring order in widely separated and sparsely settled islands, recently acquired. This was scarcely accomplished before the urgent need in Peking demanded the preparation of a division to join the allied armies marching to the relief of the foreign legations. A reorganization and increase of the army became imperative. It was undertaken with a view to meeting immediate needs, but the opportunity was availed of to present to Congress certain principles recognized as essential, not only in actual war, but when war is imminent. While there was some inclination to press one of General Upton's suggestions—that which proposed the strength of the regular army to be fixed at one man for each thousand of population, it was soon found that the true principles underlying a military policy would not admit such an abstract principle. The army had ceased to be merely a school of instruction and was confronted with grave problems in various parts

of the world. Its strength must needs be fixed not only to preserve a knowledge of the art of war but to perform immediate and important active service.

To meet a pressing need in an economical manner, it was proposed that the legislation for the army should embrace specific authority, in emergencies, for the President to increase the number fixed for each unit of organization to war strength. After much debate this was allowed to become the law, but with the restriction that the entire force, including Indian and Philippine Scouts, should not exceed, at any time, one hundred thousand men. This authority was a distinct advance in the line of a fixed policy, for it enables the War Department to meet exceptional conditions by temporarily increasing the strength of a particular regiment without the expense incident to transporting additional organizations. Other details of army organization were injected in the new law, not material, however, in the sense of a broad military policy.

For a century and a quarter public documents have recited the needs of any nation which holds the militia system as the cornerstone of its military policy. With the passing of border warfare and the vast growth of agriculture and industrial interests, citizens generally no longer possess a knowledge of firearms. For training in camp life and the use of the rifle an organized force is absolutely essential. Changing conditions have been the subject of periodical consideration by committees of Congress, and out of innumerable compromises have come the laws under which we are moving on to the next war.

No nation has a more intelligent personnel from which to draw its armies, nor better arms, equipments, and stores than those available amongst what may be termed our unorganized military resources. The extent to which the Nation should go in the organization of its military resources in time of peace is dictated by its political policies. At various periods of our history we have grown accustomed to slogans such as "54-40 or fight," but as to steadfast policy carrying possible consequences of a belligerent character, the Monroe Doctrine stands solitary and alone. Our ability to successfully defend this policy, if seriously questioned, will depend much upon the aggressor and the time allowed for preparation.

The only existing system which may be called a war policy

is that under which we are spending some millions each year to develop the militia of those States which may desire, or are willing, to participate in the distribution of appropriations. The results of the system are an infinite advance over the old militia system, so far as better trained organizations are concerned, but that it falls short of our elementary needs is patent to every student of history. The whole subject needs a thorough revision at the hands of a mixed commission of legislators and military men.

How to devise a proper scheme without sacrificing the good that has been accomplished under the new laws is a problem, the correct solution of which means much for the Nation. Many wise and deep students of our system of government believe that certain defects are inherent in any system which places dependence upon military organizations not under the absolute control of the Nation at all times. It was this belief that caused the insertion of the sections in the bill for the revision of the militia laws some eight years ago, which provided for a separate body of volunteers under the control of the general government and with officers appointed by the President. The section authorizing the men was defeated and the one authorizing the officers should have gone out with it, since it is of no practical value alone.

The new militia law has now been in operation long enough to show its value as part of a national policy. The law under which each citizen now enlisting in the organized militia binds himself to obey any call to arms without regard to State borders, insures the presence of all the most courageous in the first line of a small war. Should the war continue, volunteers will be called into service. The way in which history will then repeat itself may be exemplified by a petition to the Virginia House of Delegates from the officers of the Minute Battalion which had obeyed the first call of the Revolution:

"To the Honourable the Speaker of the House of Delegates:

"PORTSMOUTH, Dec'r 1st, 1776.

SIR,—In expectation of there being a Number of additional Troops Raised, who are to be on Colonial Establishment the officers of the Minute Battalion now in service beg leave to address your Honourable House, on a matter of infinite importance to themselves.

"The disadvantages, under which they came into their present Service hath occasioned them to suffer exceedingly in their private Fortunes—especially as they have been continued much longer, than they

at first expected—disadvantages which nothing but the calls of an injured Country would have induced their subjecting themselves to.

“You will not conceive them trivial when you consider that it was in Midsummer, when every preparation they had been making for Crops, were in their progress to perfection—& lost by leaving them. Even, under *these* circumstances, it is still their fervent wish to continue in the service of their Country: in posts of equal Rank, with those they have the honour now to fill.

“Confined to their duty at this place, they were totally prevented from offering themselves as Candidates in their Respective Counties, by personal application—(the only successful mode) at the choice of officers for the Six Regiments now Raising on Continental Establishment.

“You will conceive it a hardship for the officers of the Battalion; now to be obliged to return to their Counties, fall into the Militia as Common Soldiers & at a future day be called into service, among the common mass—under the command of those, who remained at Home enjoying every conveniency of life—whilst they were sacrificing both happiness & fortune.

“These sentiments they take the liberty of communicating through you to your Honourable House—& have the honour to be, Sir,

“Your very H’bl Servants,”

The inherent defects of any military system which depends upon the legislative and executive action of near half a hundred sovereign States, varying in size from a few square miles to an empire in extent, should be apparent to the merest novice. Nothing but nationalizing the military resources of this country will conform the military policy to the execution of political policies. This can be done only by a return to the principles of the original act for reorganizing the militia in 1903, and extending the legislation to include a national volunteer force, leaving the organized militia to its duties prescribed under the Constitution. No plan which fails to utilize in such a volunteer force the trained officers and men of the organized militia should be considered.

The ideal but probably unattainable military system for this Nation would be one in which every young man would be required to receive instruction in the militia as a prerequisite to exercise of his right to vote at State elections, and from those completing such service should be enrolled the national volunteers in each congressional district. In this way a body of men between the ages of 21 and 35 would be available, in conjunction with the regular army, to execute national policies without dragging from their homes the militia organizations which will always contain men who should not, for the common good, be taken for distant service—the immature boys, the physically defective, and

married men whose families would be left as a public charge. The Congress which enacts legislation, which in conjunction with that of the States will put into operation such a system, will go down to history as having given a greater guarantee of peace than any previous action in our existence as a Nation.

In his inaugural address President Taft said:

“We should have an army so organized as to be capable in time of emergency, in co-operation with the national militia and under the provisions of a proper national volunteer law, rapidly to expand into a force sufficient to resist all probable invasion from abroad, and to furnish a respectable expeditionary force, if necessary, in the maintenance of our traditional American policy, which bears the name of President Monroe.”

There is no suggestion of so-called militarism in this recommendation. There is no proposed competition with other nations by the inauguration of an extravagant military system to safeguard dubious political policies. It is but a direct and plain-spoken appeal for the organization of our military resources in such manner that other nations will comprehend and not heedlessly provoke war.

When the veil is lifted from the tangles of diplomacy even the most conservative and peace-loving nations sometimes find themselves enmeshed in the vagaries of contrary policies. The complications arising from an immigration policy with a closed door and a commercial policy of the open door furnish our public officials with practice in mental gymnastics that would be much simplified if our political and military policies were kneaded into one. And so the world goes, and will continue to go, down the ages, utilizing all the subtleties and refinements of diplomacy to gain advantages, the one nation over another, in order that its people may prosper. If this may be accomplished without resort to force, well and good. But if diplomacy be not successful it avails nothing to appeal to the moral sentiment of other nations. The Constitution, born of a liberty-loving and God-fearing people, and the beacon of hope to millions of freemen yet unborn, gave the Congress absolute power to raise and support armies and, if needs be, to demand the military services of every citizen and to levy upon every species of property in the hour of its peril. That this mighty power shall be wielded through the medium of a carefully wrought out and wise policy, may well be the concern of every American citizen.

WILLIAM HARDING CARTER.